

Message Text

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PAGE 01 QUEBEC 00170 252252Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 DHA-02 /060 W
-----260435Z 115119 /14

R 252015Z APR 77
FM AMCONSUL QUEBEC
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 977
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMCONSUL HALIFAX
AMCONSUL TORONTO
AMCONSUL WINNIPEG
AMCONSUL CALGARY
AMCONSUL VANCOUVER

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, CA
SUBJECT: PQ TO HELP FRENCH OUTSIDE QUEBEC

REF: WINNIPEG A-7

1. CLAUDE MORIN'S STATEMENTS IN WINNIPEG REPORTED IN REFAIR
REPRESENT PQ GOVERNMENT'S FIRST RECOGNITION OF A MORAL RESPON-
SIBILITY TO PROMOTE SURVIVAL OF FRENCH IN CANADA OUTSIDE
QUEBEC'S BOUNDARIES. QUEBEC'S NEW INTEREST IN THE SURVIVAL OF FRENCH
LANGUAGE IN OTHER PROVINCES MARKS A SIGNIFICANT TURN IN
PQ POLICY. IT IS DESIGNED TO COUNTER FEDERALIST ARGUMENTS THAT
QUEBEC INDEPENDENCE WOULD DOOM MORE THAN ONE MILLION FRENCH-
CANADIANS OUTSIDE QUEBEC TO CULTURAL ASSIMILATION.

2. PQ HAS ALWAYS FELT THAT ONLY A SOVEREIGN QUEBEC COULD GUARANTEE
THE SURVIVAL OF FRENCH CULTURE IN CANADA. ITS PROGRAM PROMISES
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TO PROMOTE THE RETURN OF FRENCH-CANADIANS TO QUEBEC AFTER
INDEPENDENCE. MORIN HAS NOW SAID, HOWEVER, THAT QUEBEC CANNOT
IGNORE THE FATE OF FRENCH-SPEAKING MINORITIES ELSEWHERE IN CANADA
JUST AS IT CANNOT ALLOW THESE FRANCOPHONES TO BE USED AS HOSTAGES
BY OTTAWA IN ITS DEBATES WITH QUEBEC. MORIN INDICATED THAT IT IS
TO A RESURGENT QUEBEC THAT THESE MINORITIES CAN NOW LOOK
FOR STRENGTH AND ENCOURAGEMENT. HIS STATEMENT INDICATES THAT

QUEBEC WILL WORK TO AID MINORITIES--NOT ONLY FROM ITS POSITION AS A COUNTRY AFTER INDEPENDENCE AS PQ PLATFORM IMPLIES-- BUT NOW AS A PROVINCE. GOQ WILL NO LONGER CONSIDER FRANCOPHONE MINORITIES JUST GROUPS CONDEMNED TO DISAPPEAR. HOWEVER, QUEBEC REALIZES THAT, CIRCUMSTANCES BEING WHAT THEY ARE, THESE FRANCOPHONES STILL WILL HAVE TO DEPEND ON THEMSELVES TO SURVIVE.

3. MOST QUEBEC OBSERVERS ARE INTERPRETING THIS PQ CHANGE OF POLICY AS A SIGN OF EVOLUTION AND MATURITY WHICH WILL BE GREETED WITH RELIEF BY FRANCOPHONES OUTSIDE QUEBEC. IT DOES SEEM TO BE THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE STATEMENT OF POLICY ON FRENCH-CANADIANS EVER MADE BY A QUEBEC GOVERNMENT. QUEBEC IS CAREFULLY COORDINATING ITS EFFORTS WITH GOVERNMENTS OF OTHER PROVINCES SO AS NOT TO INTERFERE IN THEIR INTERNAL AFFAIRS. THIS, OF COURSE, IS SUBTLE WAY TO INDICATE TO OTHERS THAT QUEBEC'S TREATMENT OF ANGLOPHONES HERE IS "LEGALLY" ONLY QUEBEC'S BUSINESS. ON OTHER HAND, QUEBEC'S ASSUMPTION OF MORAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR FRANCOPHONES ELSEWHERE IMPLIES SOME "MORAL" VOICE FOR REST OF CANADA IN QUEBEC'S LANGUAGE DEBATE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, MINORITIES, SOCIAL CHANGE, OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 25-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977QUEBEC00170
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770144-0569
Format: TEL
From: QUEBEC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770423/aaaaatdq.tel
Line Count: 81
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7630969f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 WINNIPEG A-7
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2704697
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PQ TO HELP FRENCH OUTSIDE QUEBEC
TAGS: PINT, SOCI, CA, FR, (MORIN, CLAUDE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7630969f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009